REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-36 remain pending in the application. By this Amendment, a substitute abstract is provided; and claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33 amended. No new matter is added.

In numbered paragraph 6, page 2 of the final Office Action, independent claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33, along with all dependent claims, are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,047,330 (Stracke, Jr.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have disclosed a method and a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network (e.g., paragraph [0003]). As exemplified in Figure 1, in step 105, first information is obtained from first and second routers of a virtual router. The first information can include the IP address for the virtual router, the group number for the virtual router, the group priority for a router of the virtual router, a group standby state for a router of the virtual router and the actual IP address for the router of the virtual router (e.g., paragraph [0013]). Accordingly, routers can be identified as members of a virtual router, e.g., the group priority being used to identify which router is the active router of the virtual router. A designated router can be on standby for routing functions for the virtual router when the active router switches from the active state, e.g., the active router fails (e.g., paragraph [0002]), in effect allocating a redundant router to a virtual router.

The foregoing features are broadly encompassed by claim 1, which recites, among other features, a method for a network management system to identify the

active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network, comprising obtaining first information from a first and second router of a virtual router, using the first information to determine the active and standby states within the virtual router, the standby state designating a redundant router, and producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states.

The Stracke patent does not relate to a network management system identifying active and standby states of virtual routers in a network. The Stracke patent relates to automatic adaptation of operating routers to changes in the network topology. The Stracke patent discloses how operating routers manage to adapt to changes in the network topology (col. 4, lines 35-40). The Stracke patent is directed to balancing the network topology among operational routers (col. 2, lines 8-11). However, the disclosed system of Stracke's patent is based on router-to-router adaptation without 1) an intervening network management system producing a topology of the network identifying the active and standby states, or 2) a standby state designating a redundant router within a virtual router. The Stracke patent does not teach or suggest a method for a network management system to identify active and standby states of plural routers within a virtual router in a network, the standby state designating a redundant router, as claimed.

At least for these reasons, independent claim 1 is allowable. Applicants' independent claims 6, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28 and 33 similarly recite the aforementioned claim features, and are also allowable. The remaining claims depend from the independent claims and recite additional advantageous features which further distinguish over the document relied upon by the Examiner. As such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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